

LIAISON

5 Grosvenor Square

8 July 1954

STAT

[redacted]
Chief, FBIS
2430 E Street, N.W.
Washington 25, D. C.

Subject: London Bureau's Filing of
Molotov Speech

Dear Alan,

STAT

Your memorandum of 15 June has been carefully studied and all aspects of Bureau handling of the Molotov speech investigated. I am sorry to have to say that we cannot escape a substantial part of the blame for your failure to receive the concluding portions on time and in the proper order.

Following is a review of the circumstances: [redacted] LO90543 was based on BBC assessment at the time. Reception was in fact so poor that the 8th add as received was unusable. Conditions improved, however, so that when the 9th and 10th adds arrived shortly after the end of the transmission, at about 0800, it was decided to continue to utilize the English Tass version, subject to corrections from the Russian received earlier. It was however, another two and one-half hours before the BBC Russian staff completed the corrections and fill-ins and we were able to file the last three takes. BBC regrets that staffing difficulties prevented speedier action. In any case, the 0005 slugging was correct and none of the four-hour and thirty-five minute lag between the 7th and 8th adds can be attributed to Bureau editors. I do think, however, that Washington should have been notified at about 0800 that transmission of the English version had just ended and would be used subject to correction from the Russian, together with indication of the anticipated time of completion.

The unhappy part of this story is the sequel related in Para 2 of the attachment. The responsible London operator failed in two important respects:

a. Failure to notify the Caversham editor of the Priority log jam in the London Wire Room and to seek instructions on precedence to be followed and decision on commercial filing;

b. Filing the last three takes at lengthily spaced intervals and in reverse order.

We must therefore regretfully accept the major share of responsibility for delay and reversals in transmission. The attached directive supplemented by one to the operators will, I trust, prevent repetition of this kind of dereliction. I am glad to learn that our failure led to no untoward criticism from your consumer.

Sincerely,

STAT


Chief, London Bureau